

**New Jersey Trawl Gear Characterization**  
Prepared by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

**1.1 TRAWLS**

**1.1.1 Otter Trawls**

1.1.1.1.1 Gear Description

Otter trawl vessels cannot be greater than 165 feet (50 meters) long or more than 3,000 horsepower. Mesh sizes depend on the targeted species, and range from 3.375 to 6.0 inches (8.6 to 15 centimeters) (NJDFW 2005). For general descriptions and diagrams of otter trawls see the gear appendix.

1.1.1.1.2 Gear Deployment

For a general description of how otter trawls are deployed see the gear appendix.

1.1.1.1.3 Targeted Species

The New Jersey trawl fishery primarily targets squid, mackerel, summer flounder, black sea bass, scup, Atlantic croaker, and winter flounder.

1.1.1.1.4 Number of Licensed and Active Fishermen

Otter trawl licenses are issued to an individual vessel. Non-residents can obtain an otter trawl license at the same fee as for residents and many out-of-state trawlers land in Cape May. Generally the number of active otter trawl fishermen is at or near the number of otter trawl licenses issued (Himchak 2005, pers. comm.). The number of licenses issued remained steady from 1999 to 2003 (Table 1).

Table 1. The number of otter trawl licenses issued from 1999 to 2003.

Year	Number of Licenses Issued
1999	90
2000	98
2001	89
2002	75
2003	88

1.1.1.1.5 Effort

The fishery occurs in inshore waters more than two miles from the coastline (NJDFW 2005). The Bureau of Marine Fisheries issues species-specific permits for summer flounder, black sea bass, scup, tautog, and others, and they require monthly reports. To some extent, depth fished, months fished, and time of day fished can be extracted from these monthly reports, which provide trip level data. This information was not provided for this report.

1.1.1.1.6 Status of the Fishery

The Bureau of Marine Fisheries issues species-specific permits for summer flounder, black sea bass, scup, tautog, and others, and they require monthly reports. To some extent, the catch and

effort trends in the otter trawl fishery can be extracted from these monthly reports, which provide trip level data. This information was not provided for this report.

#### 1.1.1.1.7 Sea Turtle Bycatch

There is no state-run observer program for the otter trawl fishery and no other sea turtle bycatch reports were available.

#### 1.1.1.1.8 Laws and Regulations

Gear specifications and open areas are set by regulation and are available in sections 4.1.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.1.4.

### 1.1.1.2 *Shrimp Trawls*

#### 1.1.1.2.1 Gear Description

The maximum internal opening of a shrimp trawl is 60 by 12 inches (150 by 30 centimeters). The mesh cannot be greater than 0.5 inches (1.3 centimeters) stretched (NJDFW 2005). For a general description of shrimp trawls see the gear appendix.

#### 1.1.1.2.2 Gear Deployment

No boat can have more than two shrimp trawls working at the same time, and each trawl must be separately and independently attached to the vessel by a single cable or tow line (NJDFW 2005).

#### 1.1.1.2.3 Targeted Species

Shrimp trawls are for taking grass shrimp and sand shrimp only. Fishermen must immediately return to the water any organisms other than shrimp (NJDFW 2005).

#### 1.1.1.2.4 Number of Licenses Issued

The number of shrimp trawl licenses issued remained steady from 1999 to 2003 (Table 2). The number of active shrimp trawl fishermen is at or near the number of shrimp trawl licenses issued (Himchak 2005, pers. comm.).

Table 2. The number of shrimp trawl licenses issued from 1999 to 2003.

Year	Number of Licenses Issued
1999	325
2000	334
2001	309
2002	325
2003	323

#### 1.1.1.2.5 Effort

The season for shrimp trawling is from April 15 to December 15 (NJDFW 2005). This fishery is small in scale and occurs in the State's intracoastal waterways. Depth fished and time of day fished are not reported by the licensees. Many recreational fishermen employ shrimp trawls to catch their own bait (Himchak 2005, pers.comm.).

#### 1.1.1.2.6 Status of the Fishery

Licensees do not report long term trends of catch and effort by shrimp trawls.

1.1.1.2.7 Sea Turtle Bycatch

There is no state-run observer program for the shrimp trawl fishery, and no other sea turtle bycatch reports were available.

1.1.1.2.8 Laws and Regulations

Gear specifications, deployment methods, and the open season are determined by regulation and are available in sections 4.1.1.2.1, 4.1.1.2.2, and 4.1.1.2.5.

## Works Cited

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